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ABSTRACT

Psychodrama is the acting out of difficult situations one has experienced. It gives the actors and spectators the chance to try out alternative solutions to problem situations. When these problems are acted out, the actors become better acquainted with themselves and their peers. This awareness becomes a dominant determinant of future behavior. This booklet outlines a teacher workshop that focuses on the use of psychodrama in the elementary school classroom. The effects of this technique on the teachers and students are depicted through the interpretation of several sessions. (CJ)

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SOCIAL LEARNING IN THE SCHOOLS THROUGH PSYCHODRAMA

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OLD TOWN TEACHERS CORPS

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The UMO/Old Town Youth Advocacy project has been involved in working with the inservice training of teachers.

One of the major goals of this program is to deliver field-based courses developed to respond to the needs of the teachers in their particular school settings.

A need that was expressed during the early planning stages of this project was for training to assist the teachers to work effectively with youth who were having difficulty adjusting to the classroom situation. Another concern was to develop the teacher's competencies in working in the affective domain with all their students.

The Teacher Corps recognized that social learning in the schools through the use of psychodrama could provide a viable alternative for some teachers who were seeking new and more satisfactory ways of interacting with their students.

This monograph reports a cooperative endeavor to introduce psychodrama into the elementary school. For those of us in the local school and those of us in Teacher Corps, the opportunity to work and learn with Dr. Doris Twitchell Allen has been personally and professionally a very enriching and rewarding experience.

Irene Mehnert, Ed.D.
Director, Old Town Teacher Corps

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SOCIAL LEARNING IN THE SCHOOLS THROUGH PSYCHODRAMA

A Project of the University of Maine and
The Teacher Corps of the Old Town Public Schools

DORIS TWITCHELL ALLEN

1978

Old Town Teacher Corps, Old Town, Maine

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Old Town Teacher Corps	Irene Mehnert, Ed.D., Director Tom Hamil, Ph.D., Associate Director
Old Town Public Schools	Edward J. Haggerty, M.Ed., Elementary Schools Supervisor Bruce Hautala, M.Ed., Counselor for the Elementary Schools Betty Vrooman, M.Ed., C.A.S., Counselor for Old Town High School And those teachers who attended the Workshops and accepted the University assistants

Doris Twitchell Allen

Doris Twitchell Allen
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CONTENTS

Foreword by Irene Mehnert (inside front cover)

2 Acknowledgments

3 Contents

5 Introduction: need for and potentialities of the project

6 Origin of the Project

6 Administrative Groundwork

With the Teacher Corps
With Betty Vrooman
With Bruce Hautala
Through two demonstrations of psychodrama offered to teachers and administrators

8 Program

Phase I: Three workshops for teachers before Christmas
Identification of classroom situations appropriate for psychodrama through observations by three University assistants
Getting acquainted with teachers and students by University assistants

Phase II: Four workshops for teachers after Christmas
Psychodrama sessions in the classrooms by the University assistants

Phase III: Continuing classroom psychodramas by the University assistants but without teacher workshops

Phase IV: Preparation of a report as a guide for replication of the project

9 Results

For the teachers
For the University assistants
For the children (sample psychodramas which occured in the classroom)

20 Discussion: Key principles

22 Conclusions

Introduction: societal needs for and potentialities of the project

What action can be taken in a society in which vandalism, crime, drug abuse and interracial and intercultural hostilities are a problem among boys and girls? One approach is to work with the very young ages before adolescence. For results, the need is to work with children during the formative years and in the schools where all children may be reached.

One tool already tried and found to be effective is psychodrama. In this technique individuals and groups act out in dramas difficult situations that they are experiencing. By such means, they get more of an overview of the factors involved. Through role-reversal with the person who seems to be at the core of the problem, the individual glimpses the point of view of that person and can look at the total situation from a different perspective. In simple terms, psychodrama gives opportunity to try out alternative solutions to problem situations and to decide which one seems more fair to all concerned. Obviously, in acting out situations, the individual gets better acquainted with the self, along with getting an understanding of the behavior of others.

In psychodrama, the feelings of self and others are revealed. Each person discovers that others have similar hurts and frustrations, joys and sorrows. The typical result is a unifying of the group. Gradually common goals emerge and the whole group is working toward the same general ends. At the same time, each person has become known as a unique individual who is struggling with the self's unique problems. The group becomes a microcosm of a caring society. Awareness of the feelings, and concern for the welfare of others become dominant determinants of behavior. "To do my own thing" no longer is the alpha and omega of self behavior. Self-fulfillment is sought within a perceived framework of the needs and rights of others.

Even a three-year-old can begin to grasp the concept of cooperative living. Susan came home from nursery school and said, "Georgie won't be friends. He chokes me." Susan listened to her Grandmother speak the feelings of Georgie, "I don't know what to do. I like Susan but when I grab her she cries and runs away. I want to play with someone." Susan took the part of Georgie, and Grandmother, taking the part of Susan, said, "Georgie, will you be friends and play on the see-saw with me." Susan, as Georgie, smiled. The next day, when Susan returned from school, she was beaming, "Grandmother, Georgie says he wants to be friends!"

From simple beginnings in kindergarten through six or eight grades, girls and boys can gain a wide variety of insights into the feelings of self and others, including the feelings of the teacher. Generations of children, growing up with such learnings, can make a difference in the values, and resulting behavior, of the adult society of which they will be the constituent members.

By using psychodrama in the schools, the outcomes of alternative ways of behaving are tried out within the protection of the walls of the classroom. Values are personally arrived at. They are solidly based on insights from action

within the class group. This is what is meant by "social learning in the schools through psychodrama."

Origin of the Project

Often society moves forward because diverse forces in the community become coordinated. So it was in this project. Dr. Irene Mehnert, Director of the Teacher Corps in Old Town, Maine, was working with the School Administration on several projects of curriculum enrichment. At the same time, I was teaching Psychodrama in the Psychology Department at the University of Maine and facing the students with the challenge of getting psychodrama into the elementary schools as a means of promoting social learning. One student, Mary Johnston, asked whether she might make an appointment for me with her major professor, Dr. William Mehnert. When he heard of my vision of "Psychodrama in the Schools," he said, "You should be talking with my wife. She is doing this kind of thing. Shall I call and see if she is in her office?" Fifteen minutes later, Dr. Irene Mehnert and her associate, Tom Hamil, and I were sharing mutual interests for the development of school children, teachers, the community and the human race. We ended by planning an organizational meeting the following week for "Psychodrama in the Schools."

Administrative Groundwork

"I feel so good I could tell the whole school!", or "Yeah, you're right, she picks on us!" These are two possible feelings with which children may leave their schools to return home. What is the difference in their behavior outside of their school? These two remarks actually happened and although the study here reported did not follow these children and observe their behavior after school, we know from personal experience in our own lives, from informal observations, and from special studies that words of greeting and response to requests differ markedly from the one child who came away from school with a feeling of self respect and a confidence of close communication with the teacher to the other child who felt unfairly treated and rejected. Such differences in emotional states can originate at home and influence the behavior of the child in school or, as in the above cases, can originate in school and affect behavior at home.

We know that cooperative and altruistic behavior can emerge in the one case and that anti-social acts, vandalism, and crime can follow in the wake of feelings of rejection and unfair treatment. The evidence is so convincing that when the Teacher Corps learned of an opportunity to try out a program of social learning in the Old Town schools in cooperation with the University of Maine at Orono, they took steps to introduce such program. When the results of this program of social learning in the schools was reported at the national meeting of the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama in

New York in April of 1978, an enthusiastic audience demanded: "But, how did you arrange to work in the schools?" The answer is that careful groundwork was laid before any action was taken in the classroom.

The organizational meeting with the Old Town Teacher Corps was held at their office at the St. Joseph School, South Brunswick Street, Old Town, Maine, on September 14, 1977. Those attending were Irene Mehnert and Bernie Raiche from the Teacher Corps, Betty Vrooman and Bruce Hautala from the schools and Doris Allen, Mary Johnston and Nancy Kays from the University of Maine at Orono. The goal of the meeting was stated as: "Facilitation of the use of psychodrama in the schools." The body of the minutes follows.

REPORT ON MEETING WITH DR. DORIS TWITCHELL ALLEN 9/14/77

Dr. Allen and some of the students in her psychodrama class will be offering inservice training to interested teachers. The program will center on applying psychodrama to classroom situations. Specifically, Dr. Allen plans to offer two one and a half hour workshops, and to use them as a springboard to launch further activities (e.g., a full year project involving workshops, classroom visits by interns, etc.). The end product will include a booklet on implementing psychodrama in the classroom. The implementation of the workshops will proceed as follows:

9/19-23 Betty Vrooman will prepare a short write-up describing psychodrama and inviting teachers to a short informational meeting. Bruce Hautala will present the workshop idea to the school administrators and elicit their support. He will set up a time for Betty to speak to each of the schools.

9/26-30 Informational meetings will be held at each school by Betty. Bruce will distribute the written description prior to the meeting and will publicize the time.

10/5 3-4:30 p.m. First Workshop. [Demonstration I]

10/12 3-4:30 p.m. Second Workshop. [Demonstration II]

10/19 3:00 p.m. Meeting at the Teacher Corps office to evaluate the program to date and plan further development.

Bruce Hautala, Elementary School Counselor, took Mr. Edward Haggerty, Supervisor of the Elementary Schools, to the Teacher Corps to talk with the Director, Irene Mehnert. Mr. Haggerty asked many questions regarding the proposed program and the expected outcomes. The decision was to proceed as outlined at the meeting of the Teacher Corps on September 14.

Betty Vrooman, Counselor at the Old Town High School, was the bridge between the psychodrama class at the University and the Old Town Public Schools. Betty had been a student in all the offerings in psychodrama at the University, had become Assistant in the teaching of psychodrama, and then Instructor of one section of the class. Thus, she could immediately comprehend the significance of the vision of "Psychodrama in the Schools." Also, she could

tune in to those students who were engaged in an Independent Study in psychodrama and who were eager for concrete work in school classrooms. At the same time, as a member of the Old Town Public School staff, she could comprehend administrative factors which needed to be taken into consideration.

Betty carried out her assignment received at the organizational meeting of the project. She wrote a short message to the Elementary School teachers and Bruce, who habitually sends out announcements to the teachers of the six Elementary Schools of the Old Town District, sent it out to the schools. Betty was faced with the task of telling enough in the announcement to interest the teachers to attend the first demonstration of psychodrama, without presenting a body of ideas so complex that they would choose not to become involved. In the four or five line notice, in essence, she acknowledged,"How busy we all are! We wish to help our students to like school and to enjoy their work more but with our limited time, what can we do? I should like to present psychodrama to you as a tool to help you in the classroom with your children." Bruce sent this out, giving the time and place for a half-hour meeting at the close of the school day, at each of three centrally located school buildings.

Betty's meetings were short and informal. She spoke of Doris Allen as the specialist who would give the two demonstrations, and she answered questions.

The demonstrations were attended by about fifteen teachers, two Principals, and the Supervisor of the Elementary Schools. Also present were the three University assistants, Bruce Hautala, and Doris Allen. We sat on mats on the floor of the gym of the Herbert Spencer Elementary School in Stillwater. Bruce had supplied coffee and cookies beforehand which served not only as a physical pick-up but as social time for University and Old Town personnel to become acquainted. During the first demonstration some teachers were shy and sat quietly "to be shown." But there were enough in the group who were ready to participate to permit the production of two dramas. Both dramas presented common school situations. The general atmosphere was relaxed and congenial. At the end of the second week's demonstration Bruce, as Chairman, asked the teachers what they would like to do about the possibility of a series of workshops to be held directly after school at 3:00 p.m. for one and a half hours. They voted to hold three such workshops before Christmas.

Program

Phase I had a two-fold purpose:

1. To introduce teachers to the theory and process of psychodrama (Teachers had voted for a series of three workshops.)
2. To identify situations in the classrooms where the use of psychodrama would be appropriate (Teachers invited University assistants to observe their classes.)

Phase II also had a two-fold purpose:

1. To acquaint teachers with the application of psychodrama to classroom situations (Teachers voted for a second series of three workshops.)
2. To demonstrate the use of psychodrama in the classroom (Teachers invited University assistants to conduct psychodrama sessions in their classrooms.)

Phase III's purpose was to continue psychodrama in the classrooms but without the back-up of psychodrama workshops (Teachers invited the University assistants to continue their weekly psychodrama sessions in the classrooms until May.)

Phase IV's purpose was to prepare a report on this pre-pilot project which could serve as a guide to others who wished to embark on the introduction of a systematic program of social learning in the elementary school through the use of psychodrama.

Results

For the Teachers

About twenty teachers, two Principals, and the Elementary School Supervisor attended the two demonstrations combined. Attendance at the workshops was low (four to seven) and irregular because of conflicting meetings for the teachers, and at first there was hesitancy to suggest a drama or even to participate in one. Yet this school group voted to hold three workshops before Christmas and to carry on a series after Christmas. And at the end they wanted an extra session to finish off the course.

The teacher workshops consisted of the classical psychodrama of three parts: the warm-up, the drama, and the discussion. The warm-ups emphasized physical movement as a means of loosening up the personality. Such loosening has been found to be requisite for change of habits and attitudes and expectations. Removing the shoes can bring the person into greater awareness of the enviroment as the soles of the feet and the toes come into contact with the floor. Forming a circle, taking hold of hands, and moving together in a variety of patterns can bring the group into being as an entity. Requests that each person make a pattern to be followed by the others demands immediate, spontaneous response - a key concept in psychodrama. Such experience of spontaneity by the teachers was offered as an aid to sloughing off a rigidity of relationship to peers and students at their schools. One goal was to have the teachers ready to respond on the spur of the moment in the classroom as needed. Spontaneity is a precursor to creativity. The exercises prepare the teachers to be creative; for example, in arranging three chairs, with the request that each person

make a pattern not previously made by anyone in the group. Psychodrama is a waking up process. The teachers did respond.

In the drama part of the sessions, the teachers brought up situations from their classrooms to be re-enacted. Alternative methods of teacher response toward the child's behavior were tried out. As always in psychodrama there was laughter as well as fear and discouragement. What was most impressive was the change of facial expression when insight came into what had been a worrisome problem.

Repetitive sessions of such practice yielded a flexibility and openness not expressed by the teachers at the beginning. The workshop group became more and more cohesive, and the presence of the Elementary School Supervisor at several sessions contributed to an awareness of close communication between teachers and administrator.

There was genuine excitement in the workshop group when one of the teachers demonstrated an exercise she had created at a moment of need to change the mood of her class. Her report was an example of the way psychodrama can be used in the classroom by the teacher, spontaneously and creatively. The psychodrama might consist only of a simple exercise and last only three to ten minutes. But it can bring teacher and children together in a common purpose. Thereby it can free the class for productive work on their academic tasks. Such work by the classroom teacher can be a supplement to continuous weekly visits by a person of more experience in psychodrama than most teachers will have for some time to come. As one teacher put it after hearing the experiences of others in the workshop, "We found psychodrama a tool that can help in the classroom in many ways."

Results

For the University Assistants

Growth of the assistants was gratifying. The circumstances of the project demanded their fast development and they responded. Essentially, they had had no previous experience working with a school system. In this project they participated in administrative meetings with the Teacher Corps. Opportunity was given them to observe the care with which groundwork was laid for introducing the project. They saw how new psychodrama was for the teacher-principal group gathered for the two opening demonstrations. They participated in the workshops for those teachers who elected to attend. The assistants themselves had been through the experience, in their first psychodrama class, of entering the "world of action" represented by psychodrama. But they became aware of the difference in being a student free to respond in a University class and being a teacher working under rules and regulations of administrators and a local School Board and under the expectations of parents. They found that meetings with the teachers moved at a much slower pace. The teacher workshops lasted only an hour and a half once a week. This totaled ten and a half hours, compared to the University Summer Session psychodrama class which

meets daily for three hours for three weeks, a total of forty-five hours. But it is intrinsic to psychodrama to "see" with the eyes of the other person. The University assistants became acquainted with the circumstances under which the teachers carry on, and developed a warm understanding of their situations. As J.L. Moreno, M.D., father of psychodrama, wrote:

> "A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face.
> And when you are near I will tear your eyes out
> And place them instead of mine,
> And you will tear my eyes out
> And place them instead of yours.
> Then I will look at you with your eyes
> And you will look at me with mine."

The assistants observed in the classrooms before Christmas and tried out in the teacher-workshops possible dramas based on what they had seen. They participated in dramas the teachers brought up as classroom problems. At every step of the relationship, the assistants became known as "friends" of the teachers, desirous of contributing to the teacher's efforts to maintain a productive classroom situation.

After Christmas, at the teachers' requests, the assistants actually took over the class for a period of twenty-five to forty minutes, once or twice a week, and produced psychodrama warm-up exercises and dramas based on the children's own suggestions. This was a big jump ahead in the University assistants' performances. Beforehand they were anxious, even though we had practiced examples in our seminars. They wanted me to go to their schools and demonstrate psychodrama for them. Later, as we discussed the matter, they saw the advantage of their working things out for themselves each in his or her own way. They stretched to the point of accepting the challenge of being willing to make mistakes without guilt, and even not to see their performance as "mistakes" but as "learning." We discussed how much easier it is to perceive alternative ways of directing a psychodrama <u>after</u> a session than during a session when under the pressure of the moment.

Producing dramas in the classroom brought the assistants into a new relationship with the teachers of their classrooms. Not only the children but the teachers were unacquainted with psychodramas in the school room. The teachers at first were inclined to feel responsible for "maintaining order" for the assistants: the teachers would touch, even reprimand, a child during a drama. This was a distraction for both the assistant and the children. But gradually the assistants were able to bring the teacher into psychodramatic roles in the dramas. The assistants began to perceive improved relations between teacher and children and among children. The whole class became a unit on the psychodrama days.

Naturally, there were days when the assistants were not pleased with the psychodrama period. Sharing this feeling with the teacher after the class was part of the development of understanding between the assistants and their respective classroom teachers.

The climax of the project was the report on it in New York as one part of a two and one-half hour Symposium of Psychodrama in the Schools at the 36th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama (ASGPP), April 6-9, 1978:

In the University - Lee D. Fuller, Ed.D., R.N., University of Indiana
In the High School - Ruth Bowers, M.A., Troy High School, Ohio and Betty Vrooman, M.Ed., C.A.S., Old Town High School, Maine
In the Elementary School - Doris Twitchell Allen, Ph.D., University of Maine at Orono
Mitchell L. Gelber, M.Ed., C.A.S. (replacing Nancy Kays who had left to fulfill a job commitment)
Mary Myer Johnston, M.Ed.
Norma S. Mallory, R.N.

Actual dramas taken from the classroom were re-enacted for each level. James M. Sacks, Ph.D., Director of the New York Center for Psychodrama Training, New York, and Helen Boucek, M.A., Assistant in Psychodrama at the University of Maine, were discussants. The audience followed with a lively discussion, asking that one whole day be given to the topic, Psychodrama in the Schools, next year, and suggesting that perhaps a Division of Psychodrama in the Schools could be organized within ASGPP. An initial mailing list was compiled there at this session. This experience was professionally maturing for the assistants: it opened their eyes to the broad significance of their work on this project.

But what this project has meant to the assistants cannot be wholly understood without some words of the University assistants themselves.

Mitchell Gelber: "I had not had the opportunity to work with elementary school children before this experience. I was somewhat hesitant to begin and took a very passive role during my first few meetings in the classroom. However, these first sessions gave me opportunity to identify situations which might be translated into psychodramas. Soon the children began to draw me into their group, and I became one of them. This was very rewarding for me because I felt free to be as spontaneous as the situation allowed. The children were very receptive to the action and mobility of the psychodramatic experience, and the teachers were very willing to have the opportunity for me to come into the classroom.

The meetings at the teacher workshops on Wednesday afternoons provided a different reward. This included the sharing of ideas and events of the other teachers and assistants who were participating in the project. The teachers presented school situations which were important to them and I gained invaluable knowledge into the dynamics and workings of the classroom."

Mary Johnston: "In order to make this project in the schools a success I found that I incorporated into my own life one of the guiding principles of psychodrama - to see with the eyes of another. The need to go beyond a mere sympathetic understanding of the problems of teachers and students was clear from the beginning: I had, literally, to put myself in their shoes, see with their eyes. And, little by little, this principle has crept into my behavior toward others, both those in my personal sphere and those with whom I have only fleeting acquaintance. The claim which has been made by Doris Allen, that 'psychodrama is a way of life,' has become very real to me as a result of this personal experience in the school project."

Norma Mallory: "I felt so firmly committed to the principle of developing affective measures in the school system, that it sustained my faith when I wrestled with my inadequacies.

My group of third graders gave me some wonderful treasures: insights into their capacities for responsibility when encouraged to take it, their boundless sources of creativity and imagination in problem solving, the need they have for adults to accept and listen to them, and the richness and honesty of their interaction."

Results

For the Children

I recently sat in a school hallway while waiting to give a demonstration of psychodrama to the teachers, and as I observed the faces of the children ready to return home I questioned: "What is education? Is a person educated who does not know how to establish an inner peace?"

The school dramas here reported show that boys and girls, even in kindergarten, can learn that taking turns, like sharing toys, is one way to be friends. The children can experience how much it hurts to be ridiculed by classmates, how very much it hurts; in fact, so much that they will be likely to think twice before laughing again at a person who falls down or otherwise meets with an accident. And they can learn from personal experience, from an exercise, how unpleasant it is if an individual does not look at the person who is speaking. As a child said after a psychodrama session: "It must be hard for the teacher when we don't pay attention when she is talking to us!"

In the project we worked with dramas in three grades for eight weeks. I cannot help but ask how many more learnings could take place during thirty-six weeks of psychodrama, even if a psychodrama person visited only once a week!

The first drama contained herein is reported by Mary Johnston who worked with the sixth grade, the second by Norma Mallory with the third grade, and the third by Mitchell Gelber with the kindergarten.

Mary Johnston with the sixth grade:

I have spent approximately eight weeks with a sixth grade class of boys and girls. Following a few initial observations in the classroom I had three ses-

sions with the children, meeting once a week. The teacher was able to allow twenty-five minutes for each session. At the beginning I had some difficulty gaining the interest of all members of the class. I began to realize that I must present exercises that would involve everyone. The following is an example of this. The resulting group cohesiveness paved the way for future dramas. I give credit to Ruth Bowers, Guidance Counselor in the Troy, Ohio High School, for this particular exercise. She, who received psychodrama training at the University of Maine, uses it with most favorable results in her Guidance program in her school.

Director — O.K. everyone, the first thing to do today is to get into pairs. Why not just turn your chairs to face the person next to you?

Class — (Some muttering and half-hearted protest but they did as I suggested.)

Director — That's fine. Now one person in each pair is an A and the other is a B. You decide which is which.

Class — (Some haggling over this and I tell them it makes no difference and I explain the rest.)

Director — A's will pretend that B's are new in the class and will talk to them for one minute explaining where all the important places are in the school - lunch room, playground, etc. B's will pay no attention to A's, will look everywhere in the room except at A's, no eye contact at all. O.K., go!

(Then I asked A's to tell how it felt.)

Class — (Comments about how "lousy" it was, how there wasn't any point in talking, how they felt "stupid.")

Director — Now A's will talk to B's and B's will pay full attention, eye contact the whole time, quietly listening. Tell B's about the class trip to the University, what you saw there. Go!

(Then I asked how it was for them this time.)

Class — (Most said it was much better, it felt good to have someone listen.)

The whole thing was repeated with B's doing the talking and the responses were much the same both for the non-listening and the listening.

Director	This experience might make you think of other, similar experiences. Anyone like to say something about that? What does it remind you of?
Pair 1 (boy)	I know of someone who never listens. It's the principal. Whenever I get sent to his office he won't listen to what I try to explain to him - he just looks the other way. It sure bugs me. People ought to listen!
Pair 2 (girl)	I was thinking about how it was when we were trying to do psychodrama and lots of kids were joking around. That was hard.
Pair 3 (girl)	It made me think of what it must be like for the teacher.
Director	How do you mean?
(girl)	Well, you know, when she's trying to teach us stuff and we don't pay attention. It must be awful.

This was the first time to my knowledge that anyone had shown insight into the problems of the teacher or had been aware, in general, of the responsibility involved in listening. At my subsequent meetings with this class, the children certainly listened more intently to me.

Norma Mallory with the third grade.

Today in the third grade the teacher led the class in the warm-up phase. She asked the children to recall the exercises they had just done in gym and do them in a follow-the-leader fashion. She started them off by demonstrating two or three and the children were particularly responsive to her, giving her more eye contact than usual and greatly enjoying the shared laughter and esprit de corps. Then we sat in our circle and I asked for hands of the persons who had not yet done their own drama and would like to do one. Three children raised their hands and we started with Jennie, the first one to offer.

Jennie, nine, said that she had had "an awful bad time once on the playground with Brad," aged eleven. "He put his hands around my neck and really choked me and I could not breathe or anything." I asked her to describe the setting of the drama and then to show us what happened.

Jennie	O.K. A bunch of us girls were standing over here by the school fence. Natalie, Betty, Dora and Patricia come over here 'cause you guys were there - remember? (They come up, giggle, and poke each other.)

Director	Now, whom do you want to play Brad?
Jennie	There's nobody in here mean enough, but Hale is a good pretender.
Hale	(Bounces up.) Where do you want me?
Jennie	O.K. You come into the school yard over there, walk by us, and slip in the mud and fall right into it. (Class laughs uproariously.)
Hale	Hi Jennie, Hi Natalie! Oooh - Oh, no! (Falls in puddle.)
Girls	(Laugh hysterically, shout and make fun of him.) Ha, Ha, look at Brad! He fell in the puddle!!
Jennie	You're so dumb, Brad - it serves you right! (To Director: Now Brad comes and chokes me and gets me all dirty and it hurts!)
Director	O.K., Brad, pretend to choke Jennie.
Hale	You brat - I'll get you! (Pretends to choke her and pushes her around.)
Director	Let's stop right here. Jennie, how are you feeling?
Jennie	I'm scared 'cause I feel like I can't breathe and he is really hurting me. Why should he hurt me? I didn't do anything!
Director	O.K. We all saw what happened, right Jennie? (Jennie nods) Now let s go back and do it again, and this time let's have the whole class laugh when the girls do.
Hale as Brad	Hi Natalie, Hi Jennie! Oooh-No! (Falls in puddle. Girls laugh at him and class joins in.)
Director	Brad, tell us how you are feeling.
Hale as Brad	I feel awful! I'm all wet and muddy and my clean pants are dirty!
Double 1	And I had on my new sneakers and they're probably ruined!
Double 2	I feel pretty dumb, tripping and falling flat in front of all those girls!

Director	Now let's do it again, only this time I'd like Jennie to be Brad and Brad to be Jennie.
Jennie as Brad	Hi Natalie, Hi Jennie! Oooh-No! (Falls in puddle everyone laughs.)
Brad as Jennie	(With reminder from director.) You're so dumb, Brad! It serves you right!
Director	Let's all laugh again! Brad, how are you feeling?
Jennie as Brad	(Sheepishly) I'm embarrassed, and - I don't know.
Director	(Doubling for Brad) And when they all laughed and laughed and Jennie called me dumb, I just got so mad and hurt inside that I wanted to - (Gestures to Brad to pretend to choke Jennie.)

This seemed like the natural conclusion to the drama as Jennie's expression verified that she now understood exactly why Brad had attacked her.

Director	Jennie, shall we stop here? (Jennie nods.)
Natalie	I want to be Brad before we quit!
Director	All right, Natalie. Do you want to start from the beginning?
Natalie as Brad	Yes. Hi, Natalie! (Everyone laughs.) Hi, Jennie! Ooops - Oh No! (Laughter and fun-poking.)
Jennie	(Looking uncomfortable) You're so dumb, Brad. It serves you right!
Natalie as Brad	Go ahead and laugh if you want, but you wouldn't think it was so funny if it was you! (Gets up, brushes self off, and walks away.)
Director	So, Natalie showed us a way to handle being laughed at. How does that make you feel, Jennie?
Jennie	Well, I hadn't thought of it like that before, and if I had I wouldn't have laughed so much.
Director	Unfortunately, our time is running out, so let's all sit down and see if anybody else has been in a situation like this before.

John — When I was two I fell in a puddle and got all muddy, but it was fun!

Patricia — I got all dressed up in brand new clothes for church and fell down and got dirt all over my dress. My brother and sister laughed at me, but I cried, and my mother was mad!

Roland — That time that I did my drama about my sneakers was like this and it was Brad, the same kid, who did it! Remember, he took my new sneakers away from me and everybody laughed and I told him I'd get the teacher if he didn't give them back. But, in my drama, I told him just how I felt about my sneakers - that they were new and I was scared they'd get hurt and all that and he gave them back!

Director — So, when we tell people how we are really feeling inside it helps them understand us, and then maybe we don't laugh at each other, or fight with each other so much, huh? (Lots of nods and smiles.)

Mitchell L. Gelber with the kindergarten.

The warm-up today consisted of a circle with all children joining hands, circling to the right, then to the left, and into the middle and back again. Finally, seated on the floor in a circle, we begin the drama.

Lars — What are we going to do today?

Timmy — Let's play a game.

Class — Yeah, all right!

Mrs. Walters (Teacher) — Ron has been angry with the other children. Want to tell us about it, Ron?

Ron — (Shakes head and moves back a bit.)

Director — Perhaps you can tell us about it, Mrs. Walters?

Mrs. Walters — Ron doesn't like anyone to use the truck while he is playing with it and he gets angry when someone asks him.

Director — Do you suppose we can see what takes place? Ron, would you like to show us?

Ron	(Shakes head.)
Director	O.K., who wants to make believe they are Ron and show us what happened? (All hands go up except Ron's.) Let's see Timmy, how about you? Now, who would like to make believe they are coming to use the truck Ron is playing with? Phyllis, you may. (The two children move into the center of the circle and the Director reminds them of the roles and the scene. Timmy gets the make believe truck and begins to play with it as Phyllis comes up behind him.)
Jane	I want to use your truck.
Timmy as Ron	No, it's my truck. I'm using it.
Phyllis	I want it! (Grabs for it.) Give it to me!
Timmy as Ron	NO! (Ron watches intently.)
Director	Let's stop here. Phyllis, how are you feeling?
Phyllis	I'm angry with Ron. (Director suggests she tell him.) I'm angry with you!
Director	Ron (Timmy), why don't you tell Phyllis how you're feeling?
Timmy as Ron	You're bothering me. I'm angry too.
Director	O.K.-Now, how about giving some others a turn? (Everyone, including Ron, raises a hand. I chose not to call on Ron as I felt he was beginning to warm up but was not at a peak action level.)
Director	Lars, why don't you play the part of Ron, and Norman, you try to use the truck.
Norman	I want to use your truck.
Lars as Ron	No, I'm playing with it.
Norman	Can we use it together? We'll share it.
Lars as Ron	I don't want to. I'm using it. (Director again asks how each is feeling.)

Director	Now, let's go through this again. (All raise a hand.) Ron, do you want to use the truck? (He eagerly jumps right onto the imaginary truck.) Mary, why don't you try to use the truck?
Mary	Hi, Ron, can I use your truck?
Ron	No. (Fairly softly.)
Mary	You make me angry, Ron. (Ron shrugs.) Can I play with it for a while and give it back to you? I promise.
Ron	Here! You can play with it! (Smile broadly.)
Director	How do you feel about that, Ron? (He continues to smile.) Mary?
Mary	I felt good!
Director	O.K., let's everybody stand up and hold hands and swing them back and forth very gently. So, what did we learn today?
Timmy	That we can share.
Phyllis	We can take turns!
Ron	We don't <u>have</u> to fight.

Discussion: Key Principles

Whence the success? - I believe the foregoing psychodramas do give evidence that this pre-pilot project was a success.--Certain principles, attitudes, and shifting goals are here recorded, lest we forget.

1. The project was <u>sponsored by already established and recognized educational agencies,</u> the Teacher Corps of Old Town, Maine and the University of Maine at Orono. My <u>Psychodrama in the Schools</u> proposal could immediately fall into a niche as one part of an on-going umbrella program. We in psychodrama were relatively free from administration and could focus primarily on the core of our vision, which was the "process of nurturing social learning through psychodrama."

2. The basic administrative steps came from <u>inside</u> the school system. We in psychodrama did not have to ask for introduction of the project into the schools. The representatives, Betty Vrooman and Bruce Hautala who presented the administrators and teachers with the possibility of incorporating the project into the classrooms, were already an integral part of the school system.

3. All participation by the teachers was voluntary and arrangements were made for the teachers to apply for credit for the psychodrama work, as part of the requirements for re-certification, if they wished to do so.

4. All teacher-workshops were open, whether a person had attended previously or not. This allowed for the "spread of the word." We realized that psychodrama was new to the group and that it would be accepted only gradually. Such openness made the operation of the group more complex but the disadvantages seemed less than the advantages.

5. The teachers who attended the workshops were free to accept or not accept a University assistant to observe in the classroom for identifying situations which would lend themselves to the use of psychodrama. That is, attending workshops was not automatic commitment to adopting a University assistant. We realized that some teachers might like to get better acquainted with psychodrama first. At every step teachers were invited to participate but not pressured.

6. Teachers participated in developing their own inservice training program. At the end of the two demonstration sessions, they were faced with the possibility of having a series of workshops during which period the University assistants would observe in the classrooms to identify situations where psychodrama might be used. The assistants would discuss these situations in the workshops and even try out dramas on the basis of them. The group present at the second demonstration decided to hold three workshops before Christmas. And at the end of the third workshop, they decided to hold three more after the Christmas holiday, and at that time they said that they would like the University assistants to come to their classrooms and present actual dramas with their children. The spring workshops were extended into a fourth session, and the assistants were invited to continue their weekly visits until May, even without the backup of workshops.

7. All workshops were scheduled conveniently after school at 3 p.m. and were terminated promptly at the end of one and a half hours.

8. The sessions were held at a school more centrally located than that where the demonstrations had been held.

9. These workshops were held in a classroom with movable desks rather than in a spacious gym. We wanted to demonstrate that it was possible to hold psychodramas in normal classroom settings.

10. Bruce always served coffee and cookies before the sessions. This was important physically and socially. The University assistants did very well in using this time to get better acquainted with the teachers.

11. Bruce, who as already stated, was a member of the School personnel, functioned as Chairman of any introductory or closing business.

12. The University assistants and I accepted without question whatever commitment the School system and teachers wished to give. We acknowledged to ourselves that this was a pre-pilot study and therefore a learning period for ourselves as well as for the schools. We emptied ourselves of any grand expectations; we pared down our goals to realities to avoid feelings of frustration. We did not look upon the attendance of four to seven at the workshops (plus Bruce and the four of us in psychodrama) as discouragingly low but opened our eyes to the continuous change of relationships in the classrooms visited by the assistants. The change included teachers as well as children.

13. The University assistants learned from doing--supplemented by seminars and special action sessions of their own without the teachers. When they were asked to give psychodramas in the classroom beginning in January, they felt unready and asked me if I would come to their schools and give the first psychodrama for each. I said that I could do that but that we better talk it over later. When the assistants met at one of their four-hour sessions, I suggested that they might prefer in the long run to work out those dramas by themselves in their own way, not expecting too much of themselves at first, and remember that they could re-enact the situations and get feedback in our seminars and in the advanced University class in psychodrama in which they were enrolled. They accepted this challenge and in the end felt grateful for the opportunity to discover their own strengths.

14. The University assistants had opportunity to ventilate emotions, resolve conflicts and gain new insights. We met for an hour after every teacher-workshop to assess what had happened and to plan for the next workshop. The assistants also shared some of their experiences with the advanced psychodrama class of which they were members, a two and a half hour session. In addition, from time to time they met for four-hour periods at my home. Here they could work on personal and relationship problems as well as problems of techniques. The team grew more and more supportive of one another, and united in goals, attitudes and methods of approach in working with the school system.

Conclusions

An overview of this pre-pilot project of Psychodrama in the Schools, close on the heels of the last phase, yields the following conclusions:

1. Social learning in terms of improving relationships to others and relations to self can be given a significant boost in a school system through the use of Psychodrama in the classrooms.

2. Such programs can bring teachers and children into a functional wholeness, into a new cooperative relationship in which the whole group is united on agreed-upon goals. Individuals can learn to modify their own goals to harmonize with goals of the group; and the group can learn to accommodate group goals to individual needs.

3. Teachers and children can gain a desire to help one another, for example, learning to read better, or in learning to be on time. Remarks such as, "I'm scared to read aloud because I make mistakes and you all laugh at me," and "I don't like to arrive at school early because I don't feel I have any friends" can be worked out in drama and lead to a new kind of understanding and caring for one another.

4. Teachers and children can gain new awareness of the personal goals of one another, and of the difficulties encountered in reaching them. Both can learn to speak more honestly and openly about their feelings and their needs.

5. Through spontaneity training in the psychodrama, teachers and students can learn to become more expressive in a constructive way, which can lead to creativity.

6. Both teachers and children can acquire the habit of looking at the point of view of others. In this sense they become more flexible and open, less tight and arbitrary and self-centered. The "role-reversal," taking the part of the other person in the drama, is one means to this end.

Other specific social learnings could be mentioned. But these will suffice to show something of the practical, immediate, yet basic and long-range possibilities of Psychodrama in the Schools. The influence of a full-blown project in all grades could eventually spread out and make positive impact on the affective climate of the entire school, thus providing a significant contribution to societal needs.

The Author: Doris Twitchell Allen, Professor Emerita of Psychology of the University of Cincinnati, and Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Maine at Orono, is known for her innovations in her field. She introduced a third dimension into projective testing with her Twitchell-Allen Three-Dimensional Personality Test in 1948. She brought psychological services to the Children's Hospital and to the Children's Convalescent Home in Cincinnati in 1936 - where she continued for over eleven years. As chief psychologist at the Longview State Hospital, 1944-1957, she set up regular psychodrama sessions for residents (patients) at a time when group therapy was rare in State Institutions. Doris Allen was the first to offer courses for credit in psychodrama on a university or college campus. This was at the University of Maine summer session at Orono in 1962. In 1964 at the University of Cincinnati she gave the first psychodrama credit course to be offered on campus during the academic year.

With strong convictions regarding the wastefulness of war, Doris Allen reacted to World War II with the creation of Children's International Summer Villages, conceived in 1946 and brought to reality with the first Village in 1951 with 55 eleven-year-old boys and girls from nine countries. The radical idea was that society needed to start with pre-adolescent children to build an adult world that would negotiate with emphasis on common goals as a substitute for armed combat. Sixty-one countries have participated in this program; thirty-one of them have held Villages. By the end of 1978 the number of Villages will have totaled 316.

In order to offer international experience to "every" child, in 1971 Doris Allen organized International School-to-School Experience in which a visiting team from one country visits an elementary school in another country for one month. The host school provides contacts with the total school group in a way to promote friendships from kindergarten through six or eight grades. Thereafter roles are reversed and the first host school sends a visiting team to the partner school.

For her contributions to scientific and social thought, Doris Allen received recognition from the French Government through the award of Les Palmes Académiques in 1961, and recognition from the Government of Guatemala through the Orden Del Quetzal in 1976. In Strategies Against Violence(Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1978, page x), Editor Israel Charny calls Doris Allen "a pioneer in the translation of behavioral science theory into real life applications for non-violent change."

"A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face.
And when you are near I will tear your eyes out
And place them instead of mine,
And you will tear my eyes out
And place them instead of yours.
Then I will look at you with your eyes
Any you will look at me with mine."

†From "Einladung zu einer Begegnung", J. L. Moreno, M.D., Vienna, 1914, as quoted in PSYCHODRAMA VOL. 1, J. L. Moreno, M.D., 1946, Beacon House Inc., Beacon, N.Y., Publisher.